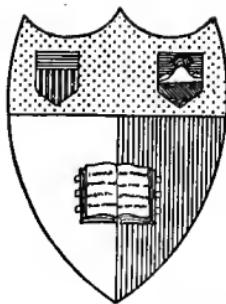


British-American Discords and Concords

A Record of Three Centuries

The History Circle

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British-American Discords and Concords

A record of three centuries

**Compiled by
The History Circle**

**G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
The Knickerbocker Press**

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PUBLISHERS' FOREWORD

THE History Circle first met at the City Club of New York in May, 1917. Its object is to study and present in simple form past national and international experiences for such light as they may throw on present events and policies.

The membership of the History Circle is restricted to American citizens, and comprises historians of authority, business men, editors, engineers, writers, and others. A committee of these members has given labour for over a year to the preparation of this monograph, which constitutes the first publication in the series that the History Circle has in plan. A number of the professors of history in the

leading universities have contributed to the work the service of their own research and of their authoritative criticisms. The judgment of business men has been given in regard to the availability of the material for the interest and apprehension of the general public. Editors and other literary workers have contributed their aid to the final shaping of the material. The work of these contributors and collaborators has been rendered gratuitously and anonymously, but the publishers are able to speak with personal knowledge of their authority and reputation.

The publishers call attention to the letter from Thomas Jefferson to President Monroe, which is here reproduced in facsimile. The reproduction of the letter was placed at the disposal of the History Circle by the Congressional Library in Washington.

The author of the Declaration of

Independence, writing in 1823, expressed his hopeful confidence in the coming about of certain conditions, which conditions have now, a century later, been in part secured.

The text of *British-American Discords and Concords* summarizes the relations between Britain and America during the three centuries which have elapsed since Englishmen first settled on the American continent.

The main purpose of the narrative is to present facts, but space has been found to weave into the text a thread of philosophy and of human interest which prevents it from being a mere record of events, and which gives evidence of the vital relations of certain of these events to phases of the present great war.

Following the narrative, will be found a list presenting one hundred and thirty references from leading American historians

which bear out the statements and the conclusions of the text. The volume contains further a bibliography giving titles of some ninety works for broader reading on the subject.

It is hoped that the public reception given to this first work of the History Circle will warrant the publication of further monographs, similar in general purpose and character.

NEW YORK, Oct. 1, 1918.

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**British-American
Discords and Concords**

British-American Discords and Concords

INTRODUCTION

THE political isolation of America is past. As a result of the attack of the greatest medieval autocracy of Europe, America has been drawn into the rapids of international politics.

In guiding his nation through the cross-currents of that mighty stream, an autocrat can command. The leader of a democracy, however, must rely on the enlightened approval of the people. Thus, upon the free people of a democracy rests the ultimate and unavoidable responsi-

bility for its policies. The conscientious discharge of this responsibility is the price they must pay for the privilege of continued self-government. To discharge this responsibility properly, free men must come to their decisions advisedly, intelligently, and without prejudice.

In the years immediately ahead, Americans will have to decide rightly and quickly the most momentous and fateful problems of their national life. The issues cannot be avoided or the responsibility shifted. The measure of liberty they can help extend to the world, even the degree of liberty they can retain for themselves, will largely depend on the intelligence, lack of prejudice, and the public spirit with which they, in the near future, view their international affairs.

Appreciating the gravity of imminent problems, a number of Americans have

collaborated in the compilation of this monograph on the past relations between America and Britain. Their hope is that the results of their collaboration may help to an unprejudiced knowledge of these past matters; for sound judgments on some of America's present and future national affairs can be reached only if approached with an open-minded understanding of the past.

A discussion of America's relations with Britain may be divided into three epochs:

Between 1607 and 1763 occurred the establishment in America of the Anglo-Celtic race, and the growth of the British-American Colonies.

In 1763 the immediate causes of their secession from Britain began to take form, and from then until 1815 ensued the anti-British period.

Since 1815 there has been a century

of peace between America and Britain; but in the course of this century there has been more than once threat of war, and conflict has been avoided only by mutual understanding and forbearance.

THE FIRST EPOCH

1607-1763

The American Colonies.

The history of the United States may be said to have begun with the patent of exploration granted by Henry VII to John Cabot on March 5, 1496. Cabot is the first definitely recorded discoverer of the North American continent along which he coasted, thus laying the foundation on which the British colonization of North America was built.

Jamestown, founded in 1607, was the first British colony on the continent. Gradually other settlements were planted until the English-speaking people and their rivals, the French, held the whole Atlantic seaboard from Labrador to the Spanish settlements in Florida.

To generalize about all the British-American Colonies would be unsafe, for there were many settlements, begun under various differing tenets, by men of many creeds and aspirations. There is one statement, however, that will hold good for all. They all soon came under the control of sturdy Anglo-Celtic free-men who had inherited the spirit of Magna Charta together with that of Cromwell's rebellion of 1642, which for-ever overthrew for Englishmen the out-worn theory of the "divine right of kings." With such an inheritance they easily passed on to the doctrine that "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed."

In each of the American Colonies an elective assembly was formed, but to most of the Colonies the British King appointed a governor. The assemblies raised the moneys wherewith to meet the

colonial expenses, including the salaries of the governors, and discussed with them the administration of the laws. Thus in America were reproduced contemporary British conditions, namely, that the elected representatives of the people made the laws and voted the taxes, while the King or his agents administered the laws.

In England, Parliamentary growth had been a series of bargains between the King wanting money for private and public expenses and the representatives of the people wanting an ever-increasing voice in government. The colonial assemblies and the governors followed a similar course; but in America representative self-government grew more broadly and more rapidly than in England.

Suffrage is now so inclusive that it is necessary to recall that, in 1775, of the 8,000,000 people in England only about 150,000, or 2%, had the power to elect

representatives to Parliament, whereas of the 3,000,000 American Colonials probably over 5% had the right to vote, although this varied greatly in different Colonies.

These democratic conditions in America and the public temper which had produced them were incomprehensible to the reactionary Hanoverian George III when he came to the throne, in 1760, with the avowed purpose of establishing the British Crown as an autocracy. He, therefore, deliberately set out to make himself King, not as a leader who obeys his people but as one who commands his subjects. His attempt to turn back the progress of self-government among the English-speaking people resulted in the War of 1776 and the secession of the American Colonies.

THE SECOND EPOCH

1763-1815

Causes of the American Revolution. 1763-1776

In colonial days the world at large looked upon Colonies as outposts, the primary purpose of which should be to contribute to the prosperity of the home country. But many Americans and not a few Englishmen held a different view. In 1754 Benjamin Franklin wrote:

“ . . . What imports it to the general state whether a merchant, a smith, or a hatter grows rich in Old or New England? . . . And, if there be any difference, those who have most contributed to enlarge Britain’s empire and commerce, increase her strength, her wealth, and

the numbers of her people, at the risk of their own lives and private fortunes in new and strange countries, methinks aught rather to expect some preference."

Each of the American Colonies, having achieved an unprecedented measure of local self-government, had come to think much of its own attainments, its own commerce, and its own laws. This is characteristic of virile young communities. In the thirteen American Colonies it resulted in each Colony paying scant heed to its neighbours and all paying even less heed to imposts and mercantile regulations emanating from England. So self-centered was each Colony that they would not join together even for mutual defence. Benjamin Franklin, while agent for the Colonies in England, publicly stated this.

When England imposed imperial customs duties, American merchants took

refuge in smuggling; but when the French and Indians attacked the western outposts of any Colony, England was told that it was her duty to defend her colonial realm. England was, therefore, obliged to incur heavy expenses in the French and Indian colonial wars. The Colonials often refused to bear their share of these expenses or to furnish their quota of soldiers; and this, even though the new conquests west of the Alleghany Mountains were valuable primarily to the Colonies.

It was not unnatural that the Colonials came to be looked upon as unruly irresponsibles who should either defend themselves or meet part of the expense England incurred in defending them. The autocrat George III, intolerant of democracy even at home, was ill-fitted to handle the situation. His ministers were no wiser, and at that time the King controlled Parliament.

In 1763, English troops, with material assistance from the American Colonials, had finally conquered the French in Canada, and all the north country passed to the English-speaking peoples. For a little while it seemed as though joint success in arms had drawn the Colonies and England closer together.

But, beginning in 1763, the English Government tried to raise colonial revenue to offset at least a part of the colonial expenses England had had to incur, by enforcing trade laws which for a hundred years had for the most part been left unenforced. This effort interfered with the practice of smuggling, which had become general, and raised much feeling against the King and his agents. After reviving the trade laws, England enacted a new impost law known as the Stamp Act. This also was intended to raise colonial revenue to help offset

England's colonial expenditures; but its enactment caused great public indignation.

The heat of the resulting controversy between the Colonials and the Crown brought into prominence radicals who advanced separatist tendencies. Their protests incensed the wilful George III who persisted with his blundering retorts to the insubordinate utterances and acts of the American Colonials.

In 1775, about one third of the American Colonials, led by radicals, merchants interested in freedom of trade, and independent aristocrats such as Washington and Jefferson, formed the group which ultimately became the revolutionists. The large landholders of the middle colonies, merchants injured by smuggling, and conservatives led another third of the population opposed to secession. The remaining third, most of

whom were middle-class farmers, were quite indifferent to the political issues.

It became, therefore, the task of the revolutionists so to present their cause as to give a promise of success to a movement actively supported by only a third of the population. The continuation of the autocratic acts of the unpopular King and his adherents, and the overbearing manner of his civil and military agents furnished the theme. Thomas Jefferson, with his masterly command of language, framed the platform and drew up the Declaration of Independence. In it he combined an idealization of the most radical political tenets then current in both England and America, with a vigorous arraignment of the failures of George III to understand colonial conditions, as evidenced by his attempts to coerce the self-governing American Colonials.

The American Revolution. 1776-1783

A revolt started by a minority of the Colonials was predestined at best to a protracted and precarious course, with a strong probability of failure. With continued disaffection and desertions among his troops, constant intrigue among politicians behind his back, and entirely inadequate finances, the genius of George Washington was fully tested. That he did not meet prompt and complete defeat seems remarkable; that he carried the Revolution through to a successful end seems marvellous.

The American Revolution was in fact a civil war fought by men of the same race, with democracy on one side and autocracy on the other. The radical and revolutionary American Colonials fought the forces of autocracy with shot and shell. They were effectively aided by the liberal British across the sea. In Eng-

land, some army officers resigned their commissions rather than fight the Colonials. The unpopularity of the war obliged the King to supplement his forces by hiring Hessian mercenaries. British statesmen entered the struggle and this civil war was fought in the British Parliament as earnestly as on the battlefields of America. Indeed it was won in Parliament rather than on the field, because the aggressive action of the British Ministry, directing the army and the navy, was from the outset hampered and finally defeated by the members of Parliament. The blunders of the King and his ministers had so incensed the more democratic people that Parliament became liberal and forced its will on the King.

Results in England of the American Revolution.

In the reign of George III, England was still far from being a democracy; its

8,000,000 people did not have the power to elect representatives to the House of Commons and the franchise was possessed by only some 150,000 members of the landed gentry and other land-holders or men of property. It is, therefore, all the more remarkable that a majority of the representatives of this small electorate, with its strongly aristocratic connections, should ultimately have sided with the American revolutionists against the autocratic King. And while the attainment of American independence may seem to have been the greatest result of the American Revolution, it had another result of great significance. Its reaction on the British Government resulted in the final supremacy of the British Parliament over the Crown, thus ending in the reign of George III the six hundred years' struggle since Magna Charta.

The momentous change of making the

Ministry responsible to Parliament instead of to the King was greatly hastened in England as a result of the American Revolution. The fall of the last British Ministry responsible solely to the King placed the entire government of Britain under the control of Parliament. From then on, this semi-hereditary, semi-elective, but strongly aristocratic body made the laws and levied the taxes. It designated the ministers who should execute the laws, disburse the public funds, and conduct the government according to the will of Parliament, instead of according to the will of the King.

The change in the control of the Ministry deeply affected Britain's future colonial policy. We have seen that the autocratic acts of the King and his Ministry caused the secession and loss of the American Colonies. Later, Parliament, though still aristocratic, broad-

ened the franchise so that the House of Commons became more representative of the people, rather than especially representative of the landed aristocracy. This resulted, ultimately, in a democratic Parliament and in the present Commonwealth of Britannic Nations—an alliance of the six self-governing and non-tributary nations comprised in Newfoundland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the British Isles.

Thus we see that the lesson learned by Britain from the American Revolution gave just grounds for George Washington being subsequently acclaimed in the British Parliament as “The Founder of the British Empire.”

*Early Weakness of the American Union.
1783-1793*

The American Revolution was a revolt against the attempt of the British King

to curtail local self-government. Its success naturally stimulated the local and separate self-government of the Colonies, each of which became in theory a sovereign power.

In the well-federalized United States of today it is difficult to realize that at the outset many States carried this theory so far as to maintain customs barriers against others. It was the common opinion that the Central Government was charged only with the negotiation of foreign affairs; but in fact, even in these matters the Central Government had no means of enforcing the co-operation or compliance of the several States.

At the very outset of their career as a recognized nation, the States individually did not adhere to the terms of the treaty of peace with Great Britain, because there was no power to compel them to any other course than that which each

State individually chose. Many of them harassed the Loyalists still within their borders and, in breach of the terms of the treaty, confiscated their property.

On the other hand, the Americans were indignant at the conduct of Britain. They were justly indignant that the north-western forts were not surrendered to them as the treaty stipulated; and they were unjustly indignant because they were not still given special commercial consideration as if they were still under the British flag.

These irritating conditions, for which both peoples were about equally to blame, kept alive in the different States a sharp resentment against Britain. Incidentally this very seriously complicated the problems of Washington, Madison, Hamilton, and Franklin who laboured long before they succeeded in establishing a real union of States. The fact that

several of the northern States made an effort to associate with their ratification of the Federal Constitution a stipulation that they had the right to withdraw from the Union whenever they might see fit, is a noteworthy index of the weakness in their early bonds of union.

But the following sentences, written by Franklin to the British Peace Commissioner, David Hartley, on the 16th of October, 1783, show that animosity against Britain was not universal among the leaders of the American Revolution:

“What would you think of a proposition, if I should make it, of a compact between England, France, and America? America would be as happy as the Sabine Girls, if she could be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband.”

Causes of the War of 1812. 1793-1812

In 1793, Great Britain entered upon a

war against France which lasted almost continuously for twenty-two years and developed into a death struggle with Napoleon.

America was neutral, but out of the conflict developed the two major causes of the War of 1812: the impressment of American seamen by Britain and the Decrees of Napoleon and the Orders in Council of Britain.

During the Napoleonic Wars, commerce was brisk in America and seamen's wages were higher than in England. This resulted in wholesale desertions from British merchantmen and men-of-war whenever they touched American ports. The deserting sailors were furnished with "first papers" of American citizenship at the very docks, and such papers were passed from hand to hand for a few dollars. It thus came about that practically every American ship sailing the high seas had among her crew British

sailors who had only recently acquired such papers.

With knowledge of this, the British navy made a practice of searching American merchantmen at sea and removing from them such "Britishers." The British warrant for this was the claim, held by her until 1868, that no subject of a monarchy could, of his initiative, cast off his allegiance. On the other hand America, being especially desirous of increasing her population, claimed that allegiance was transferable entirely at the will or pleasure of the individual.

While the desertions and impressment of deserters, together with a number of bona fide American citizens, caused much feeling in England and America, the restrictions of American trade by the British Orders in Council incident to the Napoleonic wars injured American interests much more deeply.

In November, 1806, Napoleon decreed the ports of Great Britain closed to all foreign shipping. This injured American trade and caused resentment. Britain retaliated two months later by ordering all ports of France closed except Bordeaux which was left open only to American ships. This special concession by Britain to America was withdrawn ten months later and all continental ports from the Adriatic to the Baltic were closed to American shipping. American resentment focussed on Britain.

The liberal Whigs in England protested against this anti-American policy. The effect of their protest was weakened by the allegation of Senator Timothy Pickering of Massachusetts who asserted, without warrant, that Jefferson, his political enemy, planned to aid Napoleon in crushing Great Britain. The English Whigs,

however, persevered in their opposition to the Orders in Council which they feared would lead to war with America. They at last brought the Tory Government to their view. On the 16th of June, 1812, it agreed to withdraw its Orders and this was done on the 23d of June—just too late. Congress had declared war against Britain on the 18th of June.

Thus, the War of 1812 was directly the outcome of Britain's struggle against Napoleon, who in point of fact persisted in the maintenance of his own Decrees against America's commerce. The liberal Whigs in England for years had tried to avoid this war with America. Had there been a transatlantic cable to bring to America the agreement of the 16th of June, it is highly probable that the thirty months of war would have been avoided.

The War of 1812.

To the United States, the War of 1812 was of great importance. Except for the several unsuccessful attempts to invade Canada, the land fighting was within the States and most of the naval engagements were in American waters. To England, however, this war was a small by-product of her all-absorbing life and death struggle with Napoleon. She had tried to avoid war by repealing its principal cause, her Orders in Council, and when it was forced upon her, she considered it a minor issue.

In the earlier part of the war the British were generally victorious on land, while the superior fighting qualities of the infant American navy gave England much concern. But later the American forces won some signal victories on land, while the effects of their initial naval victories were practically nullified by

the British blockade of American ports. American privateers, however, remained a serious menace to British commerce up to the end of the war.

Just as this war was generally unpopular in England, it was likewise unpopular in certain sections of the United States, as is clearly shown by the Hartford Convention held in 1814. Delegates from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut met in this Convention, under the leadership of Senator Timothy Pickering, and it was commonly reported that as a protest against the war they looked toward the secession of New England from the United States.

The Peace of Ghent. 24th December, 1814

The peace which terminated the War of 1812 is, perhaps, one of the most remarkable in history. England, with her attention centred on Napoleon, had

waged with America what had practically amounted to a drawn conflict.

Both America and England claimed victory and each demanded concessions from the other. England stipulated that part of Maine and the southern shores of the Great Lakes should be ceded to her as a protection against any renewal of naval aggression against Canada. America demanded the abolition of British naval visitation and impressment of sailors on American merchant ships.

Each nation flatly refused even to consider the demands of the other. In the meantime, however, Napoleon had been taken prisoner, the European war had ceased and England, weary of fighting, was ready to negotiate with the United States. A treaty was signed which merely put an end to the fighting and left all else to be adjusted by peaceful means.

In this treaty, no reference was made to the claim of Britain to the right of search of American vessels on the high seas, a claim which had been an important factor in bringing about the war.

The Commissioners agreed, as between gentlemen, that the practice should be discontinued.

THE THIRD EPOCH

Readjustments after the War of 1812.

Parliament by 1815 had come into complete control of the Cabinet, but the franchise in England was so restricted that the control of Parliament remained in the hands of the Peers and other landed proprietors. Under their influence, a conservative Tory Government had long continued in power.

While the English Whigs tolerated America as a country of possible promise when it should have grown up, the Tories looked upon Americans as uncouth and irresponsible radicals who were beyond the pale of respectable society.

With the Tories in power and in view of what Lord Bryce has described as “the offensively supercilious attitude of

the English and the self-assertive arrogance of the Americans," there seemed little hope of a peaceful adjustment of the many points of difference left after the war.

Both sides had continued their feverish shipbuilding to control the Great Lakes; but in 1816 the American Minister to London, John Quincy Adams, suggested to Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary, that limits be mutually set to the naval forces on the Great Lakes. At first the British refused to consider such a plan, but in the spring of 1817, Bagot, the British Minister to Washington, and Rush, the American Acting Secretary of State, signed the Rush-Bagot agreement reducing armaments on the Great Lakes to the minimum required for police purposes against smugglers.

This notable step was followed by the

treaty of 1818, wherein the fisheries disputes were settled, in the main, favourably to the claims of the United States. It was further provided that the great and practically unknown Oregon Territory should be held jointly for ten years.

By the year 1846, the long, invisible, and unguarded boundary line between Canada and the United States was finally fixed. As England had ceased to impress American seamen of British birth, and as the fall of Napoleon had rendered the various Orders in Council obsolete, the causes of the War of 1812 were thus peacefully adjusted to the satisfaction of the United States.

This peaceful adjustment was all the more remarkable because, while it was being made with an antagonistic Tory Government, there occurred in Florida an incident which of itself might have brought on war.

The Seminole Indians of Spanish-Florida attacked American troops on the border. General Andrew Jackson pursued them into Florida and seized the Spanish town of Saint Marks. Incidentally he captured two British subjects, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, whom he court-martialed and executed for having aided the Indians against the Americans.

Jackson's high-handed proceedings against these men so incensed the English people that the government was almost forced to declare war. But by the patience of the Tory Minister, Lord Castlereagh, a declaration of war was prevented until further evidence was submitted. This additional evidence led England to consider that Arbuthnot and Ambrister had forfeited their country's protection because of their hostile behavior toward friendly America.

The Monroe Doctrine. 1823

That the Monroe Doctrine had for its purpose to restrain the expansion of European nations in North and South America is well known; but that it had its origin in suggestions from George Canning, the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is not so generally known.

After the fall of Napoleon, the autocracies of Continental Europe restored the royal Bourbon family to the throne of France and, at the suggestion of the Czar of Russia, formed what they were pleased to call the "Holy Alliance" and the "Quadruple Alliance." These were alliances led by the monarchs of Russia, Austria, and Prussia to resist the democratic tendencies of the times and to keep the world safe for autocrats.

A rebellion against the Spanish King broke out, and the French King, having joined the "Holy Alliance," came to his

aid, supported in turn by the rulers of Prussia, Austria, and Russia. After a campaign of some magnitude in Spain, the French overthrew the constitution and restored the King of Spain to absolute power.

In the meantime, however, the continental colonies of Spain in America had asserted and were maintaining their independence. The Spanish King accordingly requested the further assistance of the "Holy Alliance" to help him to re-subjugate his lost colonies. The members of the Alliance, with the exception of France, agreed to a reconquest of the Latin Americans, as they phrased it, "in accordance, with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

But relatively liberal England saw a menace to her interests in the proposed autocratic conquest. She, therefore, sought an alliance with the ultra-democratic United States to block the plans

of the ultra-autocratic "Holy Alliance." This suggestion from George Canning to Rush, the American Minister in London, awakened the keenest interest in Washington, and President Monroe privately sought the advice of the revolutionary patriots, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson.

Madison replied that such co-operation with Britain against the "Holy Alliance" "must insure success in the event of an appeal to arms" and that "it doubles the chance of success without that appeal."

The aged Jefferson wrote President Monroe that Britain's offer of alliance should be accepted. "By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the band of despots, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate at one stroke a whole continent, which might otherwise linger

long in doubt and difficulty." The author of the Declaration of Independence added: "With her then we should the most sedulously nourish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side in the same cause."¹

President Monroe, however, feared that the Senate and the people, having been at war with Britain within ten years, were so prejudiced against her that they would not endorse such an alliance.

The United States, therefore, instead of accepting the alliance offered by Canning, promulgated the Monroe Doctrine. This warned off all European nations from aggression or fresh colonization in the Americas, and to this Doctrine Britain promptly gave her support, thus giving it weight throughout Europe.

¹ The full autograph text of this letter is reproduced herewith.

**Facsimile Letter of Thomas Jefferson
to
James Monroe**

October 24, 1823
(reduced one-third).

Dear Sir

Monticello Oct. 24. 23

The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most imp.
-niorous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of independence
that made us a nation; this sets our compass, and points the course which we are
to steer thro' the ocean of time opening on our view. and never could we embark
on it under circumstances more auspicious. our first and fundamental maxim
should be, never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe; our 2^d never to suffer
Europe to intermeddle in Cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North & South, has a set
of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. she should there-
fore have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. while the
last is laboring to become the dominie of despotism, our endeavor should surely be
to make our hemisphere that of freedom. one nation, most of all, could distract us
in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us in it. by acceding
to her proposition, we detach her from the band of despot, bring her mighty
weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate at one stroke a
whole continent, which might otherwise longer long in doubt and difficulty.
Great Britain is the nation which annoys us the most harm of any one, or all
on earth; and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. with
her then we should the most ~~sincerely~~ sincerely nourish a cordial friendship; and
nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more
side by side in the same cause. not that I would purchase even her amity at the
price of taking part in her wars. but the war in which the present proposition might
engage us, should that be it's consequence, is not however, but ours. it's object
is to introduce and to establish the American system, founding from our land all
foreign nations, & never permitting the powers of Europe to intermeddle with
the affairs of our nations. it is to maintain our own principle, not to depend from it
and if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of the European powers,
and draw over to our side its most powerful member, surely we should do it.
but I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion, that it will prevent war, instead

Monticello Oct. 24, 23.

Dear Sir:

The question presented by the letters you have sent me is the most momentous which has ever been offered to my contemplation since that of independence that made us a nation; this sets our compass, and points the course which we are to steer thro' the ocean of time opening on our views. And never could we embark on it under circumstances more auspicious. Our first and fundamental maxim should be never to entangle ourselves in the broils of Europe; our 2nd never to suffer Europe to intermeddle in Cis-Atlantic affairs. America, North and South, has a set of interests distinct from those of Europe, and peculiarly her own. She should, therefore, have a system of her own, separate and apart from that of Europe. While the last is laboring to become the domicile of despotism, our endeavor should surely be to make our hemisphere that of freedom. One nation, most of all, could disturb us in this pursuit; she now offers to lead, aid, and accompany us in it. By acceding to her proposition, we detach her from the band of despots, bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government, and emancipate at one stroke a whole continent, which might otherwise linger long in doubt and difficulty. Great Britain is the nation which can do us the most harm of any one, or all on earth; and with her on our side we need not fear the whole world. With her then we should the most sedulously nourish a cordial friendship; and nothing would tend more to knit our affections than to be fighting once more side by side in the same cause. Not that I would purchase even her amity at the price of taking part in her wars. But the war in which the present proposition might engage us, should that be it's consequence, is not her war, but ours. It's object is to introduce and to establish the American system, of ousting from our land all foreign nations, of never permitting the powers of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations. It is to maintain our own principle, not to depart from it. And if, to facilitate this, we can effect a division in the body of the European powers, and draw over to our side it's most powerful member, surely we should do it. But I am clearly of Mr. Canning's opinion

& provoking it. with Great Britain withdrawn from their little and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would dare to risk war. nor is the occasion to be slighted, which this proposition offers, of declaring our Protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another, so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte and now continued by the equally lawless alliance, calling itself Holy

But we have first to ask ourselves a question. do we wish to acquire to our own Confederacy any one or more of the Spanish provinces? I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of states. the control which, with Florida & part this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico, and the countries and the Isthmus bordering on it, as well as all those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being, yet, as I am sensible that this can never be obtained, even with her own consent, but by war; and as her independance, which is our second interest, and especially ~~the~~ ^{her} independance of England, can be secured without it, I have no hesitation at abandoning my first wish to future chances, and accepting it's independence with peace, and the friendships of England, rather than it's association, at the expence of a war, and her enmity. I could honestly therefore join in the declaration proposed that we aim not at the acquisition of any of those possessions, that we will not stand in the way of any amicable arrangement be' tween any of these ~~colonies~~ and the mother country: but that we will oppose, with all our means, the forcible interposition of any other power, either as auxiliaries, stipendiary, or under any other form or pretence, and most especially their transfer to any power, by conquest, cession, or acquisition in any other way.

I should think it therefore desirable that the Executive should encourage the British government to a continuance in the dispositions expressed in these letters, by an assurance of his concurrence with them, as far as his authority goes,

that it will prevent war, instead of provoking it. With Great Britain withdrawn from their scale and shifted into that of our two continents, all Europe combined would not dare to risk war. Nor is the occasion to be slighted, which this proposition offers, of declaring our Protest against the atrocious violations of the rights of nations by the interference of any one in the internal affairs of another, so flagitiously begun by Bonaparte and now continued by the equally lawless alliance, calling itself Holy.

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and that as it may lead to war, the Declaration of which is vested in
congress, the case shall be laid before them for consideration at their
first meeting under the reasonable aspect in which it is seen by himself.

I have been so long weaned from political subjects, and have so
long ceased to take any interest in them, that I am sensible that I am
not qualified to offer opinions worthy of any attention. But the question
now proposed involves consequences so lasting, and effects so decisive
of our future destinies, as to kindle all the interest I have heretofore felt
on these occasions, and to induce me to the hazard of opinions, which
will prove my wish only to contribute still my mite in what may be
useful to our country, and praying you to accept them at only what
they are worth, I add the assurance of my constant and affectionate
friendship and respect.

J. W. Jefferson

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(*Signed*) Th. Jefferson.

The amazement of the “Holy Alliance” may well be imagined. Its monarchs had supposed that British arrogance toward the lost American Colonies and American bumptiousness toward a cast-off rule had kept keen the hatreds engendered by two wars. And yet for the maintenance of the new democracies of southern America all the English-speaking peoples, acting on British suggestion, had joined hands in promulgating and endorsing the American Monroe Doctrine.

The “Holy Alliance” gave up its aggressive plans to resubjugate Spain’s lost colonies. The Western Hemisphere had been made safe for democracy by the joint action of all the English-speaking peoples.

British Parliamentary Reforms. 1832

Prior to 1830, the steam-engine and the locomotive had been invented in England. The steam-engine changed manufacture

from the manual work of the artisan at home or in his shop to the wholesale production of the factory. In turn, railroads made it possible cheaply to supply industrial centres with raw materials for the factories and food for the factory hands. Thus in the first third of the nineteenth century great industrial communities were built up under entirely novel conditions of living.

After having been in the minority for twenty-five years, the liberal Whigs, in 1830, gained control of Parliament and immediately set out to reform that body. In two years they succeeded in extending the franchise among the growing industrial classes so that the House of Commons became more representative of the people. Eventually, as the popular power of the elective House of Commons grew, this branch of Parliament came so to overshadow the hereditary House of

Lords that the latter's powers finally became in practice merely advisory.

By these and later Parliamentary reforms introduced by the liberal leaders, the people came to control the House of Commons, which itself controlled the Ministry or Administration of the government. In turn, the Ministry lead the House of Commons in controlling the House of Lords through its power to cause the appointment of new lords. These progressive changes produced in Great Britain a government as democratic as that which the United States had established more than fifty years earlier when the Constitution was enacted.

The "Caroline" Incident. 1837

While the Parliamentary reforms were being evolved, America and Britain passed through some acute controversies, any one of which might have precipitated

war between peoples less fundamentally in accord with each other.

In 1837, during the Canadian insurrections, some people operating from the American shore used a small vessel called the *Caroline* to help Canadian agitators on the Niagara River. Canadian soldiers invaded the American shore, burned the *Caroline*, and in the fracas, killed an American. While these individuals had no right to aid the Canadian agitators, the soldiers, in their reprisal, had in turn illegally invaded the territory of the United States. These events aroused indignation in both Britain and America; but when the facts became generally known both countries dismissed the case.

The Maine Boundary Dispute. 1842

As the Maine boundary had been left unsettled ever since the Treaty of 1783,

Britain sent Lord Ashburton to Washington to settle it. His personal commission to do this was a noteworthy compliment to America, as he was the Whig who in 1808 had most firmly contended for American shipping rights.

The settlement was accomplished in four months by the Webster-Ashburton treaty, in the conduct of which Webster showed great shrewdness in overcoming the determined opposition of the Governor of Maine, while Lord Ashburton displayed so conciliatory a spirit that he afterwards was roundly denounced in Canada as having yielded too much to the United States.

The Oregon Boundary. 1845

Hardly had the Maine boundary been settled, when the most ominous cry yet raised threatened to bring war between the two countries. The United States,

after having offered to compromise on the forty-ninth parallel, began to claim the Oregon territory as far north as the parallel of $54^{\circ} 40'$. "Fifty-four forty or fight" became a popular rallying cry of the party that elected President Polk in 1844.

It may be that this slogan was used merely as a political platform on which to get elected, but not to be observed when it had served its purpose; or, perhaps, Polk, as President, saw the case in a truer light. At any rate, he suggested to the British that the forty-ninth parallel would make a satisfactory basis for a final settlement, as indeed his predecessor, Tyler, had suggested.

The British contended for more territory; and Pakenham, in an unnecessarily brusque reply, rejected Polk's proposal. Thereupon, Polk indicated very clearly that the United States would not discuss the matter further. Negotiations

were dropped and Congress was called on to make preparations for sustaining American claims in the Oregon region. Pakenham's refusal was not upheld by the British Government; and, in 1846, the boundary proposed by Polk was accepted.

The habit of adjusting their differences by peaceful compromises was being developed between Britain and the United States.

The Mexican War. 1847-1848

In the meantime the United States was steadily pushing to the westward by successive waves of migration. As part of this expansion, the Republic of Texas, broken off from Mexico, had been permitted to enter the Union. The Mexican War was concluded in 1848, and California, with the adjacent territories, was taken from Mexico.

In this series of events the British

Government scarcely observed the same spirit of fairness and co-operation that had marked its conduct in regard to the disputes over the Canadian boundaries.

Both President Polk and Lord Palmerston, the British Premier, were aggressive expansionists. Palmerston considered the expansion of the United States a possible future menace to British trade supremacy. The tenor of the times was competitive rather than co-operative. Britain, therefore, frowned on accretions to the United States and was busy with intrigue in Mexico and Europe, to prevent, first, the annexation of Texas and later, the acquisition of California. She even went so far as to urge France to co-operate in preventing the expansion of the United States by a Franco-British guarantee of the integrity of Mexico.

The Civil War. 1861

The aristocratic and conservative classes in Europe thought they foresaw the breaking up of democracy when the United States was sundered by civil war. In England, the adherents of the old world régime leaned to the Confederacy, while the admirers of democracy favoured the Union. The middle course attempted by the British Government throughout the war reflected this division of opinion in England.

Within four weeks after the beginning of hostilities, Britain declared her neutrality "between the Government of the United States and certain States styling themselves the Confederate States of America." The people of the Union States interpreted this prompt recognition of belligerency as an espousal of the Confederate cause and were greatly incensed. They themselves, however, by

declaring a blockade against the Confederacy and by a subsequent decision of the Supreme Court, recognized the status of the Confederacy as that of a belligerent; and they thus confirmed the propriety of the position taken by the British Government. The Confederate States, on the other hand, were indignant that Britain withheld from the Confederate Government full recognition as a sovereign power.

The “Trent” Affair.

Having been recognized as a belligerent by both Britain and France, the Confederacy appointed commissioners to these countries—James M. Mason to Great Britain and John Slidell to France. After running the Federal blockade to Cuba, these commissioners sailed for England on the British mail steamer *Trent*; but the United States warship

San Jacinto, under Captain Wilkes, stopped the *Trent* on the high seas and took off the two Confederate commissioners.

There was such enthusiasm in the Union over this act that Congress gave Captain Wilkes a vote of thanks and a silver service. But Britain pointed out the similarity between his act and her own visitations and seizures which had contributed to bringing on the war of 1812. She emphasized the fact that she had discontinued seizures thereafter, and that in 1858 she had formally agreed they were not to be repeated. President Lincoln admitted the propriety of this claim and the Confederate commissioners were released. By his ability to judge the facts and stand out against popular clamour, Lincoln thus avoided a possible clash threatened by Britain on a matter which many Americans have long

held against her as an index of her partiality to the Confederacy.

The Confederate Raiders.

The Government of the United States, as a sovereign power engaged in quelling a rebellion, sought to have warships built in Great Britain; and there is little doubt but that it was within the law in so doing.

The Confederacy or Confederate agents had a number of ocean-going blockade runners and raiders built in England. But as the Confederacy was never recognized as a sovereign power, the agents of the Federal Government made such representations to the British Government that the latter attempted to prevent the sailing of these vessels; be it said, however, that for various reasons their attempts were often unsuccessful.

On Lake Erie, the Confederates carried on such depredations from Canadian

bases that the Rush-Bagot agreement of 1817 to leave the Great Lakes free of warships was threatened with cancellation. In the Pacific, the Confederate ship *Shenandoah* was enabled to destroy the American whaling fleet because of illegitimate assistance given by Australia, while British-built Confederate raiders nearly drove Union merchantmen from the Atlantic.

These depredations upon Union vessels were charged by the Union directly to the British Government. It was claimed not only that Britain was insincere in her perfunctory efforts to stop them, but that she actually rejoiced in them. Naturally, this resulted in intense feeling against the British Government.

The case of the *Alabama* became especially notorious. This vessel was built in Great Britain and set sail just before the arrival of an order from Earl Russell, the

British Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to have her held. She received her armament in the Azores from British sources and set out on a remarkably successful career as a commerce destroyer. The Government of the United States protested and charged Britain with responsibility for the depredations of the *Alabama*.

Situation at the End of the Civil War.

While countenancing the Confederacy in what the latter esteemed as its struggle for self-government, Britain had not helped it in a large way. Consequently, at the close of the war many of the Confederate leaders condemned England for her partiality to the Union.

The Union States also were intensely bitter against England, holding that she had been most reprehensible in promptly recognizing what they considered as only

the belligerency of disloyal rebels. It was alleged furthermore that by subsequent actions and inactions the British Government had injured the people and Government of the United States individually and nationally to an extent which could not be met by hundreds of millions of dollars.

But in spite of its bitter feeling and in spite of having at its command the greatest veteran and victorious army and navy in the world, the United States settled its differences with Britain by arbitration. The Treaty of Washington was drawn up in 1871, establishing new rules of neutrality. Britain agreed to be judged by these new rules for acts incident to the *Alabama* committed years before the establishment of the rules. The United States received \$15,500,000 and paid British claims amounting to nearly \$2,000,000.

To adjudicate an offence under laws made after the commission of the offence is contrary to one of the fundamentals of our law. That Britain agreed to this is the strongest evidence of her desire to bury the differences which had arisen out of the Civil War.

It should be noted, moreover, that when the democracy of the United States came triumphantly through the fiery ordeal of the Civil War, British liberals were quick to point the example, and the victory of the American Union helped still further to democratize Britain.

This victory was of further importance to Britain because it proved that a large federal union of states or provinces could be made durable. It set a practical example for the organization of Canada, Australia, and South Africa as federated nations.

One may, therefore, say advisedly that

not only was George Washington "the founder of the British Empire," but that the United States has since been to a greater extent the exemplar and pathfinder of the British Dominions than has been Great Britain herself—a point of view often novel to that old type of insular Englishman who so distressingly misunderstands and misrepresents his own country.

Fenian Difficulties and Citizenship. 1868

While the difficult negotiations which led up to the Treaty of Washington in 1871 were being conducted, the situation became more complicated by the uprisings of Fenians in Ireland. These Fenians had many kinsfolk who had left Ireland because of the potato famines of 1848–50 and had since become American citizens. In America they attained so much political influence that politicians

seeking election found it profitable to "twist the British lion's tail," and they persistently did this to the great anxiety of American statesmen.

Certain Irish-Americans with Fenian affiliations aided and abetted their brethren in many ways against Britain in Ireland and carried their scheming into Canada. Some of the more venturesome of them even returned to Ireland bent on aiding the uprising from behind the shield of their American citizenship. Those who ran foul of the British law were taken in charge as British subjects, for Britain had not yet conceded to her subjects the right to cast off their individual allegiance to her even if they went through the form of becoming citizens of another country. The principles involved were similar to those incident to the impressments preceding the War of 1812.

The United States protested on behalf of her Irish-American citizens, and not only secured their recognition as Americans but thereby induced Britain to extend to her subjects the right to throw off their allegiance to her when they became citizens of any other country.

This act was a remarkable British concession to the American idea of democratic citizenship; and it is characteristic of the conditions which justify the claim that Britain long ago abandoned the ways of autocracy and has in reality a thoroughly democratic government.

The Venezuelan Boundary. 1895-1896

The dispute over the Venezuelan boundary shows most clearly that democracies as well as autocracies can be rushed into war against each other merely by the ill-advised sayings of their chosen leaders and against the intentions of the peoples,

unless they have an informed and intelligent public opinion on international politics.

For many decades, the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela had been in dispute. Venezuela had persistently urged that it be fixed by arbitration, but Britain had not acquiesced; and Venezuela alleged that British settlement was meanwhile pushing into territory claimed by Venezuela.

The United States had repeatedly urged Britain to act on this matter, but it seemed destined to perennial postponement.

Suddenly, the British Premier, Lord Salisbury, received a peremptory note from President Cleveland, reviewing the dispute, pointing out the interest of the United States in its settlement because of the Monroe Doctrine, and demanding in threatening terms the immediate sub-

mission of the whole matter to arbitration. The very able but irascible old Tory bristled at Cleveland's terms and especially at the sweeping claims advanced for the Monroe Doctrine. Lord Salisbury replied by two simultaneous notes. The first categorically denied the American claims for the Monroe Doctrine, while the second, for the first time, presented certain British views on the Venezuelan dispute and closed by refusing to submit the matter to arbitration.

President Cleveland laid the situation before Congress which promptly granted his request that it provide for an American Commission to investigate and report on the boundary.

His message to Congress was couched in such language that the two branches of the Anglo-Celtic civilization suddenly found themselves, to their unutterable amazement, apparently on the point of

war; and all, forsooth, over a few miles of South American boundary of remote interest to either. Yet, on consideration by the peoples, it all simmered down to an arrogant and aggressive statement haughtily repelled. While jingoes and Tories vituperated, most people seemed amazed that the controversy had arisen and were chiefly concerned that it be peacefully settled.

So close had the myriad personal ties become between Americans and Britishers that the exchange of their views quickly resulted in mutual understanding. The Venezuelan boundary was soon settled by arbitration, and another British-American discord passed harmlessly into history.

Before its final settlement, however, the incident produced a noteworthy result. A wholesome lesson in public policy had been taught by the fact that the explosive utterances of their chosen Executives

had nearly thrown the two halves of the English-speaking peoples into a destructive war.

To guard against sudden ruptures in the future, a general arbitration treaty was drafted by the representatives of both nations and was submitted to the American Senate. The Senate, however, as it still reflected the anti-British feelings which the Venezuelan episode had re-awakened in many people, withheld its ratification of this treaty. But after eighteen more years had passed a comprehensive Peace Treaty was finally ratified by both nations.

Britain and the Spanish War. 1898

Within two years of the close of the Venezuelan controversy the real similarity of standards existing between America and Britain was shown during the Spanish War.

Continental Europe, under the leadership of Germany, was antagonistic to the United States; but Britain faced Europe as the champion of America. Nor did she confine herself to giving merely moral support.

When Admiral Dewey's fleet had captured Manila, it was suddenly threatened by a more powerful German fleet sent there in the hope that a favourable opportunity might arise to seize the Philippines for Germany. But the British Admiral told the German in effect that the first shot at an American warship would be answered by the British fleet.

Since then all differences between Britain and the United States have been settled by most amicable discussion and in a full realization of their common tenets.

CONCLUSIONS

We have passed in brief review the most salient common actions and reactions of the two great branches of the English-speaking people. We have seen Britishers transplant to America's soil the seedlings of English democracy and we have seen how, in the freer air of the New World, these outgrew their parent counterparts left in England.

Whether in England or in America, the struggle of the people and of their representative leaders, who frequently were liberal aristocrats, has always been toward the same goal—personal liberty for all from autocratic rule.

When the Hanoverian George III attempted to make himself a British autocrat, the American Britishers he oppressed revolted and their struggle eventually enlisted the support of British liberals in Parliament who helped them win their independence from the govern-

ment of the would-be autocrat. But note the sequel.

Because he had the ignorant temerity to try to turn back the tide of English-speaking self-government in America, the British Parliament took from him and unto itself the supreme power to conduct the British Government by controlling the Ministry; and thus Britain, though still retaining the outward forms of a monarchy, grew in time into as true a democracy as is the United States.

The story of the American Revolution would indeed have been a noble epic if that war had really been as it is taught in many American school histories—if George Washington, the faultless hero, had been surrounded only by noble and harmonious patriots; if he had lead a united people against a nation of tyrants; if this devoted band had had to fight against the concentrated wrath of the mightiest military power of the world; if they had repeatedly triumphed over all the armies sent to overwhelm them;

and finally if they had achieved a splendid victory and with it liberty from the tyrant England. Such is the fanciful tale which has thrilled American children and has coloured in later life all of their thought of England.

But how contrary is all of this to the facts, and how unjust is it to the great leader who is recognized throughout the English-speaking world as one of the greatest men yet born of the Anglo-Celtic race. The true tale is nobler still.

George Washington had the support not only of Americans but of the best minds in England; he was opposed not only by British autocracy but by the reactionaries in America; he not only achieved America's independence from England, but he liberated both America and England from the rule of an autocratic King; he not only founded the American Commonwealth of States, but the example he thus set showed Britain how to evolve the Britannic Common-

wealth of Nations. He was not only "the Father of his Country," he was also "the Founder of the British Empire." Yet even this dual rôle gives him and his fellow patriots but half their due, for they, more than any other group of men, accelerated the growth of modern democracy, English-speaking democracy, the democracy after which are fashioned all great modern democracies.

Justice, therefore, requires that in America we give to Washington and his associates not merely the credit due them for their accomplishments for America, but that broader measure of credit accorded them by Britain for what they have done for all English-speaking peoples. And, simultaneously, we should give proper credit to the British origins of American democracy: to the "Great Commoner," William Pitt, and to his followers, who supported the cause of the Colonies under very trying circumstances; to the liberal Englishmen who aided America to her independence; and to the

whole race which as a result has evolved English-speaking democracy.

The joint heritage and common duty such antecedents have transmitted to all the English-speaking peoples are clearer today than ever before.

We have seen how America fought England again in 1812 because she thought England was again oppressing her in trade and in the persons of her naturalized citizens; and how, while at war, the two nations made peace without concessions and gradually in after years peacefully composed the differences over which they had fought.

Since then, the century of British-American peace with its discords and concords has gone into history. Its obvious lesson is that two great powers, having similar tenets, can learn to make their adjustments with each other peacefully; always provided, that they desire to understand each other, that they desire peace more than war and that they desire above all that justice

be done. Such is the lesson of the concords.

But the discords of the century of peace carry a deeper lesson. From them we learn that two nations, of common origin, of common language and culture, both democracies and both justice loving, can come most perilously near to war with each other over small as well as over large affairs of unexpected origin. Only by exercising patience, intelligence, tolerance, and goodwill have they avoided repeated wars during the century of peace. Had but one of such necessary attributes been wanting, war in many instances would have resulted. May we not rationally deduce from this record that where such attributes are in part or in whole lacking between two or more nations, peace will not endure if the self-interest of but one calls for war?

There is yet a deeper lesson. We have seen that the Monroe Doctrine, in essence emanating from England, caused a limited co-operation between America and

Britain. The mere statement of their common purpose stopped the proposed aggression of the "Holy Alliance"; and ever since, by the dictum of the English-speaking peoples, the Western Hemisphere has been kept safe as the nursery for democracies.

Again the autocracies of Prussian Germany and Austria, they of the "Holy Alliance," have assaulted democracy. They thought Britain and America divided today just as the "Holy Alliance" thought they were in 1823. But America has joined those whose valiant efforts have kept the fight for the most part in Europe. She has realized that it is not a "European War" but entirely a war of the aggression of the greatest medieval autocracy of Europe against modern democracy. After nearly a century, the prophetic words of our great democrat, Thomas Jefferson, have come true. With Britain, we are "fighting once more side by side in the same cause . . . not her war, but ours."

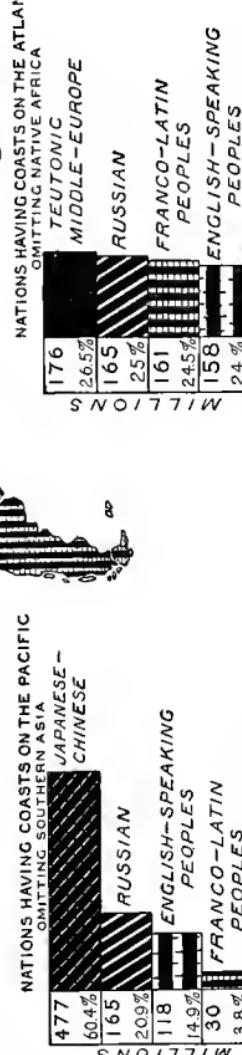
Through the red fog of this war the future is clouded; we cannot define the details; only the great racial and political masses of the world beyond the war are discernible.

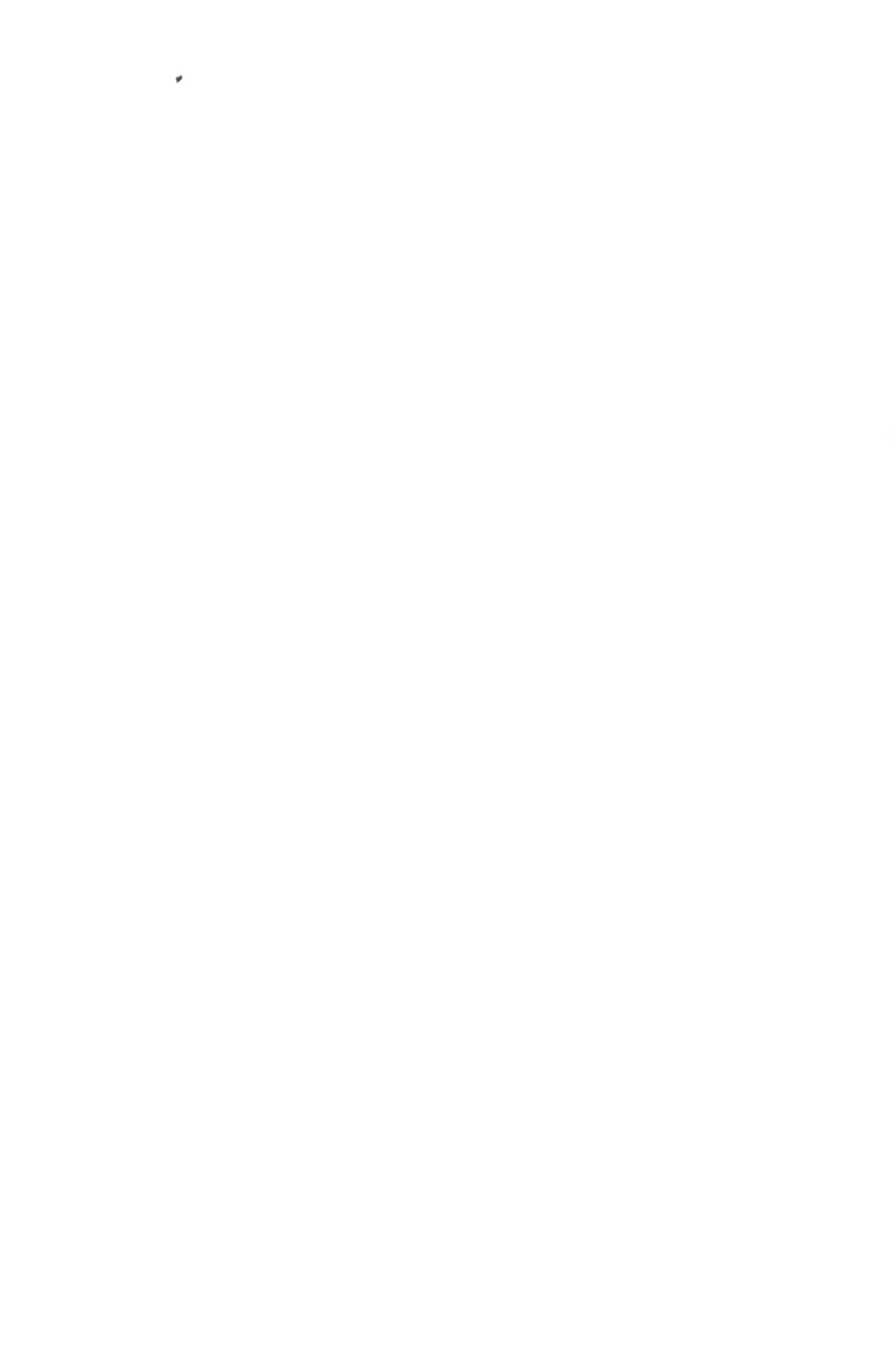
But looming through the fog we see our need of the unity of the English-speaking peoples.

Numerical Strength and Geographical Position of the Races of the World Capable of Conducting Modern Warfare.

*Nov 1917

The English-speaking nations on the shores of the Pacific Ocean rank third in the population around that ocean. Those on the shores of the Atlantic rank fourth there. The strategic and numerical center of the English-speaking peoples is now between the two oceans in North America.





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